



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
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Minutes 02/09/2011

Arlington Tree Committee Minutes

February 9, 2011

Present: Mary Ellen Aronow, Eliza Burden, Lisa Decker, Andrew Fischer,
Patricia Muldoon, Sally Naish, Corinna Vanderspek, Greg Watt

Prepared by: Corinna Vanderspek

Note: Sally Naish provided updates on some of the discussion items on
February 25. Her comments are added in red.

The January Meeting Minutes were approved.

Report on Sally Naish's meeting with Jean Smith, assistant to Jimmy Dodge
Money generated from tree hearings goes into 'Trees Please' account. Account has \$7000 now, \$1500 are coming.
(Latter payment has been received.)

Town paid for Arbor Day seedlings. It is not clear who paid for Town Day seedlings. When street trees (bareroot)
arrive from the nursery, they are heeled in at the cemetery.

The department does not use 'Dig Safe' when planting street trees. Would only be needed for off-berm planting.
Jean says tree gators were put out in the past but nobody used them. Questions: Were there instructions? Where
are the gators? How many do we have? Sally will try and find out. (JD has ~50 gators.)

Mary Ellen comments on database. It would be helpful if street numbers and street names were in separate
columns in database. Currently, this is not the case, but it would make it possible to sort data geographically, to
help determine patterns of tree loss/planting.

Public Works will not be able to do any planting this spring. Committee assumes, however, that the department will
heel trees in until planting time.

Tree requests

Numbers given reflect tally as of February 23 (if different, numbers from the February 9 meeting are in parentheses).

Requests:

Friends of Spy Pond: 2 red maples

Clarissa Rowe: 1 elm

New Requests (not resulting from tree removal): 22 (15 + 7 more from Steve Ray); (14)

Replacement Requests (after tree removal): 6

Total Requests: 31 trees (23)

Sally notes that more requests (~60) are received in the spring, but it is not clear yet whether we'll need to add these
to the order.

Tree order

The town's expectation is for us to organize the ordering. Trees will have to be ordered by late February, early March.
Jimmy says that the order would have to go out to bid if we were to exceed \$5000. Otherwise, we can/would use
New England Nursery Sales, his supplier. <http://www.newenglandnurserysales.com/>

After some discussion, the committee decided on a target number of 100 trees, provided that number will not wipe out the whole budget. Sally will try to find how much money is available. (Sufficient funds are available from Town budget to cover usual tree order.) Number of trees to be planted can be decided by email.

Locations for tree plantings

Off-berm: No word yet from town counsel regarding off-berm planting. (Town can plant within 20 ft of pavement with homeowner's permission. Details, such as who owns the tree, would be worked out on case-by-case basis.) The Lexington Tree Committee is drafting a letter to homeowners about tree care, will share with committee through Corinna.

Sidewalk: Question about how town decides where to plant trees apart from those requested? Sally to ask Jimmy. (Start with replacements 1) in business district, 2) residential streets. Oldest first - still replacing trees removed in 2007. JD agreed w/ idea of only planting where residents willing to take care of tree.)

It is noted that we need to assess the proposed planting sites. Lisa points out that at least ten of the requested locations are in her neighborhood; it would be easy for her to take a quick look.

Mary Ellen suggests focusing on areas that had more damage last year.

Jimmy might have information on last year's East Arlington microburst, also, where road work has been done, etc. The committee feels that planting locations should be chosen according to where they would make a real, positive impact.

It is understood that Jimmy has to approve all suggested locations.

Finding volunteers for the tree planting

Town assumes that the Tree Committee will organize this.

Sally feels that DPW has the equipment and should be responsible for transporting the trees to the locations where they will be planted. It will have to be done on the day they're planted.

Andrew would like to know if the town has an auger for planting. (JD agreed that DPW could help with transportation of trees; could also help with tools, supplies, etc. DPW uses backhoe for planting; cannot be used by others.)

There is consensus that it would be best to contact established groups for help with planting; Greg notes this will provide built-in infrastructure and dependability.

It is decided that every committee member will approach one or two groups about volunteer planting help. Ideally, we will each find 10 volunteers.

Andrew: Friends of Spy Pond, Reservoir group

Corinna: Master Gardeners Association

Eliza: Elementary schools' garden committees

Lisa: Girl scouts

Mary Ellen: ACC (Arlington Children's Center), boy scouts

Patti: Arlington High School, Arlington Catholic, Minuteman

Sally: Arlington Garden Club

Patti suggests we contact the people who requested a street tree. Mary Ellen will write draft email with information about tree choices, asking whether the recipients would be willing to plant, and offering help if needed.

Andrew suggests establishing a system whereby every precinct in town would have a volunteer precinct captain to scout locations, find volunteers for planting and maintenance, and act as a connection between us and the community. Andrew to write draft.

Arbor Day (April 29)

Stick with blue spruce? They are the cheapest. No order could mean losing Tree City status. Ordering 500 blue spruce seedlings would cost \$345 versus \$595 for the same number of red oaks. It is agreed that oaks, for example, would be a more appropriate choice for our area. Given the town's budget situation, Eliza suggests that the Tree Committee could offer to pay for the difference, perhaps with 'Trees Please' funds.

EcoFest

Date: March 26, 10am - 2pm, Town Hall.

Committee feels we should have a presence at EcoFest. Patti volunteers to staff the Tree Committee table at the event, but would welcome prep help.

Mary Ellen and Eliza are working on a newsletter for their neighborhood, to be published mid-March. Part of it will be

devoted to trees and their benefits, and to introducing the Tree Committee. Want to put in as much info as possible about plight of trees, town side of it. Message: Encourage people to plant or donate. Mary Ellen is working on a graphic that could also be used at EcoFest.

Mary Ellen suggests introducing web site, having map with planned planting sites.

Sally notes that the website badly needs help. Still very sparse. Eliza offers to help.

Sally also notes that additional professional help with the website will probably have to be paid for (possibly using Trees Please account?). (Per Teresa DiBenedictis, some money could be made available from DPW budget - up to \$500.)

Sally will talk to Christine Aquilino about writing her monthly Advocate column about trees. (CA suggested contacting Advocate directly. SN did so and got their agreement to cover our story.)

Items to be discussed at the next meeting

Andrew's bill.

Corinna will report on possible liaison/cooperation with Lexington Tree Committee.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, March 9, 6pm, Selectmen's Meeting Room